(b) the follow-up action taken so far on each of the recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARA): (a) and **(b) A Conference of State Chief Secretaries** was held on 30th July, 1988 to consider the paper on 'Panchayati Raj and District Planning' prepared in the Workshop of Collectors/Districts Magistrates on 'Responsive Administration'. A statement on the consensus arrived at and recommendations made by the Conference is laid on the table of the House (*See* below). These recommendations will be further discussed in the appropriate fora before any action is taken in this regard.

Statement

The major points around which consensus emerged in the Conference were:

(i) It was both necessary and desirable to revive the Panchayati Raj Institutions.

(ii) Planning must begin at the grass roots.

(iii) A three tier structure of Panchayati Raj was suitable as a general model. Modifications were needed in some of the states of the North East, Jammu & Kashmir and Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

(iv) There are advantages in shifting the focus of development planning and administration to the block and away from the village on the one hand, and the district on the other, which is not close enough to the people to generate a sense of participation.

(v) Except for elections at the gram panchayats level, elections for block and district panchayats could be on party lines.

(vi) While planning decisions and monitoring functions should be left to elected representatives, executive responsibilities should vest with the Collector and his team of officers. The Collector could function as the Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Zila Parishad for this purpose.

(vii) Development and regulatory aspects of administration should not be separated. One focal point in the district should deal with both. The District Collectors should be the focal point and his independent status should not be compromised at this stage in our development through his being made an employee of the local body.

(viii) The interest of the weaker sections should be safeguarded not only through a policy of reservation of seats, but also through earmarking of certain financial allocations.

(ix) In developing functions and responsibilities to local bodies, it is necesary to eschew too ambitious an approach, but ensure that whatever functions are in fact devolved are matched by needed resources financial and organisational.

(x) A political consensus is required for implementing suggestions that have now emerged on Panchayati Raj and District Planning. Regarding a Constitutional amendment, this could also be pursued, provided there was a political consensus on this point.

Theft of Uranium

1547. SHRI KAILASH PATI MISHRA:
SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in the Statesman dated the 24th September, 1988 stating that refined uranium worth over Rs. 1 crore was seized from a Ranchi based (Businessman) smuggler near the Nepal

border at Sitamarhi (Bihar) on September 19 last; if so, from where the uranium was stolen; who is responsible for the security arrangements there and also the persons said to be involved;

(b) the number of cases of uranium theft (in various forms) have come to notice as yet, the countries where the stuff is supposed to have been taken to, the number of operating gangs, how much worth of uranium has been lost as yet, thus;

(c) the number of prosecutions launched in such cases and against how many persons with details thereof;

(d) what is the number which have been sentenced to jail; and

(e) measures taken to strengthen the security and to severely punish the guilty?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) Yes, Sir. However, it has not been established that what was seized from the businessman was actually uranium.

(b) to (e) Necesary information is being collected from the Excise Department of the Bihar Government.

Disappearance of an engineer of Tarapur Atomic Plant

1548. SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:
SHRI RAM AWADESH SINGH:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in the Times of India dated the 4th October, 1988 and state whether Mr. A. V. Patil has been done away with by persons who are alleged to be interested in misappropriation and thefts in Tarapur Atomic Power Station; and

(b) if so, whether any enquiries have been undertaken and what is the truth in these allegations and how such security of sensitive area is being protected?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, AND ELECTRONICS AND SPACE (SHRI K. R. NARAYANAN): (a) and (b) Shri A. V. Patil, who was working in Tarapur Atomic Power Station as Scientific Assistant from 10-4-1987, left the plant site on 7-9-1987 with the permission of his superiors. A complaint that he was missing was duly lodged with the police authorities. The facts were also communicated to the Missing Persons Bureau, Bombay and were also telecast on Bombay Doordarshan. There is no evidence that Shri Patil was done away with by some persons.

Launching of ISRO

1549. SHRI VIRENDRA VERMA:
SHRI A. G. KULKARNI:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem which appeared in the Sunday Observer dated the 17th July to 23rd July, 1988 under the caption 'The Warning ISRO ignored' and if so, what are the facts in this connection; and

(b) whether it is a fact that launching of the vehicle failed because of adverse gravitational pull in that area?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY AND THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENTS OF OCEAN DEVELOPMENT, ATOMIC ENERGY, AND ELECTRONICS